

EXHIBIT 5

From: **Megan Twohey** [REDACTED]
Date: Fri, Dec 20, 2024 at 9:38 PM
Subject: URGENT questions from New York Times
To: [REDACTED]

Mr. Baldoni:

We are reporting about a crisis communication operation, conducted on behalf of you, Jamey Heath and Wayfarer Studios, to protect your reputations and harm Blake Lively's, as described in a legal complaint filed today.

The effort was undertaken last summer out of concern that complaints Ms. Lively had made during the filming of "It Ends With Us" would become public during the movie's rollout.

We have learned that Ms. Lively filed the legal complaint against you, Mr. Heath, Steve Sarowitz, Wayfarer, Melissa Nathan, Jed Wallace and Jennifer Abel, alleging sexual harassment, retaliation, and aiding and abetting of harassment and retaliation, among other claims. The complaint claims misconduct by you and Mr. Heath during filming, including repeatedly violating physical boundaries and making sexual and other inappropriate comments.

The complaint includes a side letter to her contract, signed by Mr. Heath, in which the studio agreed to install more safeguards during filming and agreed not to retaliate against Ms. Lively. She is now saying you violated the terms of the letter.

The complaint includes extensive private text messages and emails that she obtained through a subpoena and that document the crisis communication operation. They include exchanges involving you, Mr. Heath and the crisis communication team headed by Ms. Nathan. The New York Times reviewed these along with other documents.

We are seeking your response to the claims of misconduct and retaliation through this P.R. campaign, and we would welcome the opportunity to talk with you on the record. We're also sharing the other findings from our reporting, below.

Please offer any on-the-record comment, as well as any other information you think we should know. Additionally, please notify us of any inaccuracies. We need to hear back from you tomorrow by noon Eastern.

Among Ms. Lively's allegations:

Misconduct:

- During shooting, Ms. Lively brought complaints to you and Mr. Heath about alleged sexual and other inappropriate conduct.
- She claimed that you had improvised unwanted kissing with her and discussed your sex life, including encounters in which you may not have received consent.
- She claimed that Mr. Heath had shown her a video of his wife naked, and that he had watched her in her trailer when she was topless and having body makeup removed, despite her asking him to look away.
- She alleged that throughout filming, you and Mr. Heath invaded Ms. Lively’s privacy by entering her makeup trailer uninvited while she was undressed, including when she was breastfeeding her infant child.
- Your studio, Wayfarer, agreed to provide a full-time intimacy coordinator, bring in an outside producer and put other safeguards on set. In a side letter to Ms. Lively’s contract, your studio also agreed not to retaliate against her.
- Ms. Lively had expressed concerns about you from the beginning. Before shooting, she objected to some sex scenes you wanted to add that she considered gratuitous.

Creative Issues:

- With the support of Sony, the film’s distributor, she made her own cut of the movie, bringing in editors and a composer and adding in a Taylor Swift song. Wayfarer and Sony went with Ms. Lively’s cut, and she got a producer credit.

The Reputation Campaign:

- In May, several months after the filming wrapped, you were worried when you realized that Ryan Reynolds had blocked you on Instagram. “We should have a plan for IF she does the same when movie comes out,” you texted Jennifer Abel, a member of the PR team. “Plans make me feel more at ease.”
- Before the release of the film, Colleen Hoover, Ms. Lively and other cast members informed Sony and Wayfarer that they would not do any publicity appearances alongside you during the rollout of the film. Ms. Hoover had experienced frustrations with you and became upset when you told her about Ms. Lively’s allegations at a dinner last spring.
- You and Mr. Heath hired Melissa Nathan, a crisis communications specialist, who in turn brought in Jed Wallace. The plan was to harm Ms. Lively’s reputation.
- Ms. Nathan sent you and Mr. Heath a planning document in early August, describing options to pursue if Ms. Lively or her team went public with complaints about your and Mr. Heath’s behavior. She suggested talking points to use with reporters, including that Ms. Lively used an imbalance of power to take creative control of the film.
- You wanted more. Ms. Abel wrote to Ms. Nathan: “I think you guys need to be tough and show the strength of what you guys can do in these scenarios. He wants to feel like she can be buried.”

Ms. Nathan responded: "Of course- but you know when we send over documents we can't send over the work we will or could do because that could get us in a lot of trouble," Ms. Nathan responded. "We can't write it down to him. We can't write we will destroy her."

"Imagine if a document saying all the things that he wants ends up in the wrong hands."

"You know we can bury anyone," she added. "But I can't write that to him."

–Three days later, you texted Ms. Abel, flagging a social media thread that accused another celebrity of bullying behavior and that had generated 19 million views. You wrote, "This is what we would need."

–Ms. Nathan presented proposals to hire contractors to dominate social media through "full social account take downs," by starting "threads of theories" and generally working to "change narrative."

–The team worked to block stories about your behavior that had concerned Ms. Lively and reinforce negative ones about the actress.

–The press coverage probing your separation from Ms. Lively and the rest of the cast was mostly vague and didn't include the most serious allegations against you.

–Ms. Nathan texted: "He doesn't realise how lucky he is right now we need to press on him just how fucking lucky."

"The whispering in the ear the sexual connotations like Jesus fucking Christ Other members feeling uncomfortable watching it I mean there is just so much."

–Ms. Nathan indicated that she succeeded in keeping allegations against you out of stories, and wrote in one text that major news outlets were "standing down on HR complaint."

–Under the official promotion plan, Ms. Lively focused on the uplifting nature of the film rather than abuse. When you and the PR team saw that critics accused her of being tone deaf, the team decided that you would highlight survivors of domestic violence.

– There are references in emails to "social manipulation" and "proactive fan posting," and text messages cite efforts to "boost" and "amplify" online content that was favorable to you or critical of Ms. Lively.

–Ms. Nathan sent Ms. Abel a comment from Mr. Wallace that "we are crushing it on Reddit."

–The next day, one of her employees texted, "We've also started to see a shift on social, due largely to Jed and his team's efforts to shift the narrative."

–Ms. Nathan wrote to Ms. Abel: "And socials are really really ramping up. In his favour, she must be furious. It's actually sad because it just shows you have people really want to hate on women."

–When a TikTok sleuth started asking questions about you, Ms. Abel texted that "We've flagged to Jed and his team for more serious action on the social side."

–You worried that “The unfollow situation is what everyone is pointing at. Seemingly that something is much bigger under the surface - as why would they all unfollow,” and a member of the PR operation responded “Weve flagged to Jed and his team as well”

–You periodically looked for assurances that the crisis team was not deploying bots. Ms. Nathan wrote that they were not using bots and that Mr. Wallace’s operation “is doing something very specific in terms of what they do. I know Jamey & Jed connected on this.”

–On Aug. 16, when Ms. Nathan shared a Daily Mail article headlined “Is Blake Lively set to be CANCELLED?” Ms. Abel responded “Wow. You really outdid yourself with this piece.” And Ms. Nathan wrote: “That’s why you hired me right? I’m the best.”

–The manipulated media coverage and online commentary became an unusually high percentage of Ms. Lively’s online presence. She was branded tone-deaf, difficult to work with, a bully. Sales of her new hair-care line plummeted.

Sincerely,
Megan

Megan Twohey
Reporter
The New York Times

